



# Court Appointed Special Advocate Newsletter

## A CHILD'S VOICE IN COURT

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### APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS MONTH

By Laura Devany

All children deserve a safe, stable home. Of course they do. But the sad fact is that last year nearly a million children in the U.S. lived in homes filled with abuse and neglect. These are just the documented cases, the cases that result in children being placed under the jurisdiction of dependency courts. We can only guess about the actual total numbers of abused and neglected children in our country.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness month, the one period of time dedicated to the many children who live with abuse and neglect, and to remind ourselves that there may be something we can do to alleviate their suffering. CASAs are doing something everyday and the Maricopa County CASA Program has some special things planned for this very important month.

On April 1st CASA Marshall Porter will be interviewed on the KCTK 9660 AM program called "Your Second 50 Years." On April 18th the CASA name and phone number will scroll across the matrix board at Bank One Ballpark. Our program will have a Community Corner booth at BOB that day and a 30 second public announcement will air on the PA system. Of course the highlight of the month is our program's recognition of our volunteers and their dedication and commitment.

This year's recognition event will be a luncheon on April 27th from 11:30 - 2:00 at the Phoenix Museum of History. The theme is "Giving the Light of Hope to a Child: Remembering the Past, Celebrating the Present, and Envisioning the Future." We proudly announce that The Honorable C. Kimball Rose will be attending the luncheon. Judge Rose established the Maricopa County CASA Program in October 1985 along with the Junior League and the National Council of Jewish Women, Valley Section. He will be the recipient of the first ever Maricopa County CASA Program Light of Hope Award. On April 6th communities across the nation will turn on lights as part of The Lights of Hope, a ceremony commemorating all the children who are victims of abuse and neglect waiting for safe and permanent homes. The award has been named in his honor, and its official name is the Judge C. Kimball Rose Light of Hope Award. We are honored to have Judge Rose and his fellow CASA founders at this year's event.

Other awards will be handed out, including The Outstanding Judge of the Year Award to Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Maurice Portley and CASA Volunteer of the Year Awards will go to June Anderson, Kathy Norton and Jean Peirce. The luncheon's featured speaker will be Noreen Sharp. Noreen is the Division Chief Counsel of the Child and Family Protective Division of the Attorney General's Office. She knows the CASA program from her time with the Court as a Juvenile Court Administrator and is always working hard to put children and families first in Arizona. She has reorganized and strengthened the structure of the Attorney General's Office and modernized how the agency tackles abuse and neglect cases. Partnership, permanency and proactive planning are the keys. We look forward to hearing how things are progressing.

CASAs are aware of the plight of abused and neglected children every month, but April is the month to let the rest of the community know there are ways to step forward and become a powerful voice in a child's life. A child is waiting for their help.

## A New Look ...

Starting next month our newsletter will have a new look. Along with this change, we would like to choose a name for our newsletter, so we are going to have a little contest. Already submitted is 'The Advocate' (Which we cannot use, as it is the name of another publication.)

Please submit your name choice by April 12, 2000, to Shannon at 602-506-4415.

The winner will receive a beautiful CASA thermal cup.

# VOLUNTEER PROFILE

## Brad Tebow

Brad Tebow has obviously mastered the art of time management and he is one of those people who make you wonder how he does it all, and so well. Brad has been a CASA since March of 1999 and has done an outstanding job advocating and navigating through the juvenile court system.

Brad's CASA child is a seven-year-old boy who is low functioning with motor skill delays. This boy didn't know how to "play;" and couldn't catch a ball or climb a tree. Brad has been working on this with him and after nine months of work, watched him catch his first ball at Christmas time. He plays basketball on Brad's shoulders and can now hold and throw the ball in the hoop. He can hang on monkey bars and jump out of a swing. He is talking more with Brad, who is now helping him with judgement and safety issues.

Brad spends a lot of time with the boy and his uncle, who is a strong advocate as well. He has coordinated things well with the CPS case manager and other parties and does not make obstacles, instead pushes gently. Brad's biggest challenge has been to recognize and understand that the "machine" that drives us through the system is very slow. He sees this as the system being cautious, which is something he can now accept. Something that helps him is to approach his case with acknowledgment of everyone else's responsibilities. The judge has hundreds of cases, as does the Foster Care Review Board; CPS has so many cases, etc. Keeping this in mind helps him see the burden they all have. As a CASA, he can help them to know this child better-- with details and facts. "The more you can tell them and recognize their situation, things will go better," Brad said.

Perhaps the balance Brad demonstrates comes from the twenty years he has been practicing the martial art of Ju Jutsu. He has been teaching this at Arizona State University since 1980. Brad is a real estate consultant when he isn't studying for classes in his second semester of law school or exercising and lifting weights regularly. Brad credits his wife for making it possible for him to juggle all that he does, including getting to know his brand new daughter, Grace. She's his new boss and so far she is breaking him in well! This is not a surprise considering how well he's adjusted to everything else. According to his coordinator, Katrisha Stuler, Brad is a pleasure to work with, is very thorough, turns in his logs on time, and writes a good court report. His contribution to the program is appreciated.

# Legislative Update

The following is a partial list of proposed legislation affecting children and families. The bills included here are those that will likely require community input to be enacted or defeated. Call the Capitol at 1-800-352-8404 to reach your legislators about these or other issues.

**SB 1134 - CPS; Central Registry** (Sen. Petersen) - Retains the CPS Central Registry, which contains all substantiated and unsubstantiated reports of child abuse, that was inadvertently set for repeal on June 30, 2000.

**SB 1290 - Children; Kinship Foster Care** (Sen. Petersen) - Establishes and regulates kinship foster care services in order to place a child with a relative for foster care.

**SB 1068 - Appropriation; Children's Behavioral Health Services** (Sen. Grace) - Makes a supplemental appropriation of \$300,000 from the medically needy account in the tobacco tax and health care fund to DHS for non-title XIX children's behavioral health services.

**HB 2312 - AHCCCS; Annuities; Children's Behavioral Health Insurance; School Outreach Behavioral Health** (Rep. Gerard) - Expands KidsCare outreach by removing existing prohibitions on AHCCCS that prevent AHCCCS and its contractors from contracting with schools to provide KidsCare outreach and information. Adjusts the KidsCare package to include behavioral health benefits similar to AHCCCS coverage. Also increases the vision benefits and adds non-emergency transportation as covered services.

**SB 1180 - Children's Health Insurance; Enrollment Requirements** (Sen. Gnant, Bee & Cirillo) - Would eliminate the current requirement that children must be without health insurance for a six-month period before becoming eligible to enroll in KidsCare.

**HB 2043 - Health Care Insurance: Medical Foods** (Rep. Gerard, Knaperek, & Preble) - Requires that any health care, health benefits or group disability contract, insurer, organization, plan or subscription that provides coverage for hospital, medical or surgical expenses must also provide coverage for treatment of metabolic disorders that are part of the newborn screening program. The coverage must include expenses of diagnosing, monitoring and controlling the disorders, including medical foods used in treatment.

**HB 2309 - Tobacco Tax; Community Health Centers** (Rep. Gerard & Foster) - Subject to the availability of monies, the AHCCCS administration must transfer to the Dept. Of Health Services \$425,000 annually for community immunization programs at community health centers, and \$75,000 annually to maintain a partnership with the private health care sector to improve the delivery of immunizations in Arizona and to maintain public awareness of the need to fully immunize citizens against vaccine preventable diseases.

**SB 1183 - DHS; Child Care** (Sen. Petersen) - Creates additional restrictions on accused criminals to prevent them from working in child-care facilities; revises procedures for inspection of records; creates additional penalties for violations; allows for certificates for homes to be issued when homes are in "substantial compliance" with the laws and rules. "Substantial Compliance" means that the nature or number of violations revealed by any type of inspection or investigation of an applicant for licensure or a licensed child care facility does not pose a direct risk to the life, health, or safety of children.

## WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS!

Carolyn Atwater	Kaye McCarthy
Mary Ann Ballerino	Eileen McHale
Theodore Broome	Raymond Newhouse
Georgia Clubb	Lori Ohmart
Vera Corbin	Joseph Orlando
Ralph Corson	Vicky Orlando
Claudia Crittenden	Lynne Parise
Don Daboll	Nancy Parra
Mary Lou Davis	Debra Phelan
Patricia Duran	Louisa Pierce
Barbara Ferrara	Phyllis Rees
Ozia Hasker	Cheryl Short
Alicia Juarez	Stacie Stewart

## Farewell

Best wishes to Steve Ley who left the CASA support staff position to pursue other interests. Farewell to CASAs Maria Sutton and Jill Brindley who will be leaving the program after almost two years of advocacy. Thanks for your time and effort.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

CASA volunteers will be able to view an extensive new **resource library** on-line. CASA Ellen Altmann cataloged this compilation for FCRB that includes articles, books and videos related to children and families. Starting April 1st, volunteers can log on to the State CASA website at [www.supreme.state.az.us/casa](http://www.supreme.state.az.us/casa) to request items to borrow. The State office will mail it to you.

The Juvenile Court received a \$10,000 **AZ Community Foundation Grant** for delinquent and dependent children. This will be used for items such as shoes, coats, and things they can't get easily. A committee will authorize payments and distribution of funds. CASAs can apply. More details to come.

**E-mail alert** - Judge Portley advises CASAs not to set up e-mail accounts for kids to speak to parents. Some concerns arose around a foster mom who allowed a child to talk to his parents via e-mail. The parents sent some not-so-friendly mail to the foster parents. Just a reminder that communication with family should be routed through CPS.

A **Confidentiality Contract** will be included in CASA case files starting April 1, 2000. Similar to the Volunteer Contract that all volunteers sign for each case, this will outline confidentiality policies as related to dependency cases.

April 9-15 is **National Volunteer Week**. Your dedication and caring is the heart of our program. Thank you CASA volunteers!

**Please note:** Karen Tyrrell and Angela Ashley will **NOT** have peer group meetings this month. Karen's next meeting will be May 9th and Angela's will be May 31<sup>st</sup>.

## Commendations

The FCRB commended **Leslie Jones** for her continued involvement on the boy's behalf. Great job Leslie!

The Court thanked **Rochelle Kellman** for her devotion to both girls on her case. Way to go Rochelle!

Judge Willett commended **Dana Gilroy** and the parties for their commitment to the child. Glad you're part of the team Dana!

Good going Linda! The FCRB commended **Linda Anderson** for her efforts to advocate for her CASA child's interest.

The FCRB commended **Gwenda Loving** for her years of service on her case. Thanks for hanging in there Gwen!

The Court commended **Rita Myrann** for her dedication to the children and the concerns she expressed to the Court. Thanks Rita, for sticking with such a tough case!

Thank you **Ewa Carlisle** for doing such a great job with monthly contact logs. They are clear and concise and on time each month. The FCRB also commended her advocacy on behalf of the family. Keep up the good work Ewa!

The FCRB commended **Beth Broeker** and the entire team for their support of the foster mother and child while the child is gravely ill. Your commitment is acknowledged Beth, especially during this sensitive time.

## CASA Sponsored Training

**April 13, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., Post Orientation Training** - All new volunteers are required to attend this follow up training to the basic orientation. Topics covered will include duties and responsibilities of a CASA, confidentiality, behavioral health services, the dependency system, and the role of CPS. This session will focus on the Maricopa County program and helpful hints to get you started on your first case. Dinner will be provided. Location: Juvenile Court Durango Facility, 3125 W. Durango Street, Room 223, in Phoenix. RSVP to the CASA office at 602-506-4083 by 4-3-00.

**April 13, 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., Satellite Broadcast: Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)**- The Honorable Katharine English will cover an overview of ICWA, its applicability and jurisdictional provisions, procedural requirements, placement provisions, and tribal sensitivity. Call Connie Lopez or Teri Page at the State CASA office at 602-542-9407/542-9547 for information on registration and satellite sites.

**April 19, 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Brown Bag Lunch with Judge Portley** - Bring your questions and your lunch to this informal session with the Presiding Juvenile Court Judge. All case discussion is confidential. Location: Juvenile Court Southeast Facility, 1810 W. Lewis Street, Saguaro Room, in Mesa. RSVP to the CASA office at 602-506-4083 by 4-17-00.

## Community Sponsored Training

**April 1, 7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Crossroads of Childhood, A Healthy Family Toolkit**- This workshop is designed to give parents and other care givers tools and techniques to help build strong families in today's hectic world. Presenters include psychologists, social workers, educators, therapists, and other experts from Samaritan Health System, Arizona State University West, and the community. Best selling author and psychologist Dr. Sal Severe will present. Location: University Center Building, ASU West, 4701 W. Thunderbird Rd., Phoenix. Registration is \$20. For additional information call 602-543-5303.

**April 14 & 15, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Following the Yellow Brick Road: A Guide to Treating Complex Attachment-Trauma Problems** - Clinical social worker and acclaimed author Beverly James will talk about the dynamics of attachment-trauma problems, assessment and treatment planning, and multidimensional treatment strategies. Participants will increase and refine their skills in working with traumatized and attachment disturbed

children and their families. Location: Mesa Community Center, 263 N. Center, Mesa. Cost is \$185. Contact Torrie Taj at 480-969-4024, ext. 225 for registration information.

**June 7-9, Family Centered Practice Conference 2000-Building Bridges with Arizona Families** - An intensive, statewide training and networking opportunity featuring nationally recognized experts in the field of family centered practice. Location: Phoenix. Call 480-759-9592 for more information.

**June 24-27, 19th Annual National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association Conference**- This year's theme is "Imagine a world where every child can thrive." Location: Arlington, Virginia. More information to come. Contact Judy Mills at 361-225-4500 for registration information.

## Book Review



*This is a new feature in our newsletter. Each month a CASA resource book will be reviewed in the hope that CASAs will choose to add it to their reading list. Our first book was recommended to CASA by Judge Maurice Portley, our Presiding Juvenile Court Judge.*

**'Ghosts in the Nursery'** by Robin Karr-Norse and Meredith S. Wiley, 1997, 297 pages.

This book is not an indictment of the system but an educational tool to help us understand that the roots of violence are grown in the earliest months of infancy.

Because of abuse and neglect, the 'feeling' circuitry of the brain that is responsible for trusting, connecting, and empathizing in most violent criminals has been damaged. This is also true of the 'thinking' circuitry which is responsible for focused attention and complex problem-solving. Thus, violent tendencies can be 'hard-wired' to the brain within months of birth.

Each chapter is introduced with pieces of the story of Jeffrey, a young murderer – told in his words, that of his older brother John and the CPS caseworkers. It is an easy read but difficult, too, because we are again forced to broaden our perspective and let go of the stereotyped illusions we hold about young violent offenders.

The authors write in a very interesting and open fashion, including statistics, prose and poetry along with clinical information and studies. The reader grows in knowledge without the pain of textbook academics. As a CASA, you will want to read and reread this book.

...by Marilyn Priebe

## Reaching Out to a Child

by Julee Newberger, CASA Volunteer

*"Re-printed from an online publication of the Benton Foundation."Connect for Kids <<http://www.connectforkids.org>>.*

Finally, after four weeks of training, three background checks and two interviews, the message on my machine said, "A child is waiting."

Not my child. I didn't have a child of my own, and I wasn't adopting. I had volunteered to become a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for a child in the foster care system.

My CASA child, whose privacy I have promised to protect, is in a stage commonly referred to as "tweens." She is not old enough to drive, but old enough to want to do things that come with being a full-fledged teenager, like hanging out at the mall after school, and staying over at her friends' houses on weekend nights.

That's why I recently decided to give my CASA child some space. As she asserts her independence, sometimes it's just plain un-cool to hang out with me. Instead of seeing her once a week, I would visit her twice a month. Besides, it's sometimes unclear for both of us exactly what role I play in her life.

As my CASA trainer explained to us, "This is not a Big Sister program, and this is not a mentoring program. We don't recommend, for example, taking them to McDonald's every time you visit."

But I knew that a moment would come - and it did- when I would look into this child's face, and after a few moments of unnerving silence, ask, "How about Mickey D's?"

So, we've indulged in some fast food and other activities that help to build a bond between us. I may not be a mentor or a Big Sister, but I want the best for my CASA child. I want to help her do well in school, make sure she has positive role models, and help to provide safe and structured activities. In short, I do what I see fit to "speak up for a child," in accordance with the CASA motto.

Of course, that doesn't necessarily mean that my CASA child looks forward to seeing me every week.

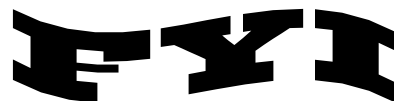
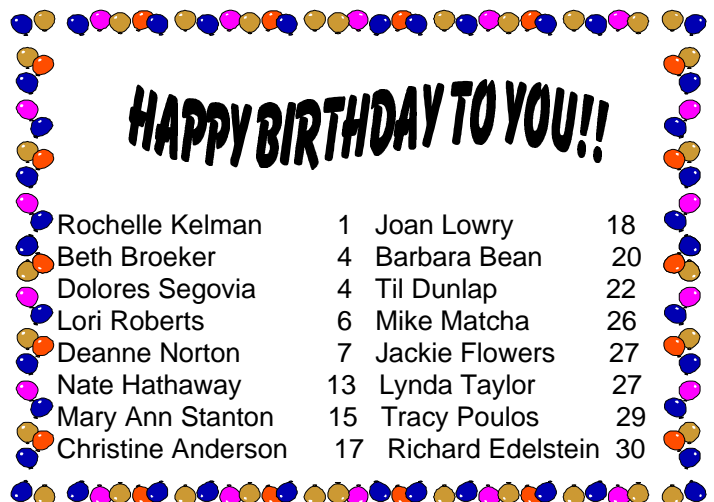
Heather, a friend and fellow CASA volunteer, says that you have to put aside your own expectations and needs and remember your long-term goals - particularly when the child's face doesn't light up with joy as you walk through the door.

Remember the real purpose of the program and what you're trying to accomplish for that child," Heather says, "rather than those uncomfortable silences, the attitude that you may occasionally encounter, and the feeling that you're not making a difference."

Over half a million children live in out-of-home care (foster care, with relatives, in group homes or residential treatment centers). All of them come to the attention of child welfare services for being abused or neglected in some way. As a CASA, you provide a constant in the life of a child who may have moved from home to home or school to school - a child who may not have any other constants in her life.

I try to hold onto this thought when I visit my CASA child, sometimes to discuss a particular matter, or sometimes just to say, I'm here if you need me. I try to keep the purpose of the program in mind: to help her find a safe and stable home.

And just when I think that she is relieved to have more space - that she doesn't appreciate my consistency, she greets me at the door and says, "Why didn't you come see me last week?"



The CASA Staff will finally all be together again. On March 23 & 24, 2000, the CASA Office at Durango will be moving to the Court Building, Suites 132-136. The address and phone numbers will remain the same.



## Training Credit

Starting in April each month you are eligible for 15 minutes of training for reading the CASA Newsletter. Just be sure to note this in your monthly contact log to get your credit.

## APPRECIATIONS

So you think your CPS Caseworker is doing a great job or maybe a Commissioner/Judge... Let us know and we will commend them. Just attach a note explaining what they have done that we should recognize and attach it to your monthly contact log, and we will ensure that they receive the recognition they deserve. Thank you Ashley Lies for the suggestion!

### ***“Cherish the Children Award”***

Jean Pierce has been selected to receive the “Cherish the Children Award” from the Greater Phoenix Child Abuse Prevention Council, to be presented at the luncheon and award ceremony on April 3 at the Heard Museum. Congratulations, Jean!



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